

AMERICAN BLUEJACKETS ARE EXPERT ATHLETES

In No Other Navy Is So Much Done for Recreation and Health of Sailors

JACK at play is quite as characteristic a fellow as when back of a 12 inch gun sending a little pleasantry to a hostile foe. Not that he takes his pleasure seriously; quite the contrary, but he does put the same vim into it whether, in the memorable words of Fighting Bob Evans, "it's a frolic or a fight."

"Whatever he does," the Fleet Athletic Officer, Lieut. S. C. Hooper, remarks in summing up the situation, "he does right."

It is this determination to be satisfied with nothing short of the best that makes the American sailor such a power to be reckoned with, whether afloat or ashore, at work or at play. In athletics alone the American sailor is an expert, though many are not aware of the fact, and a football team made up of jacks is quite the equal in physique and prowess of the average college outfit. No nation in the world has developed athletics in the navy to the extent we have done, and so important does Uncle Sam consider the development of sports among the enlisted men that now every ship has its specially appointed athletic officer to direct recreational amusement; to encourage it there is no need.

In contests with sailors of other nations in foreign ports, whether on the China station, in the Philippines or elsewhere, the American sailor emerges triumphant. But Jack has to have the equipment to begin with. He must have the spike nail shoes for baseball and the up to date outfit that goes with each sport, but given that he is then ready to bestow his whole attention on getting there, and that he succeeds beautifully every athletic officer aboard ship will convince you. With great pride they will tell you how the men under their command compare professionally with college athletes not only in football but in wrestling, rowing, boxing or any other sport.

So to further this specialty there is in the navy a regularly organized fleet athletic committee composed of five officers. Lieut. S. C. Hooper of the flagship Connecticut is at the head of it. This committee exercises a general oversight over all sports and arranges dates for regattas and sporting events. Outside the daily participation in sports, there are four distinct seasons when Jack is put on his mettle so far as athletics goes. They are when the games are pulled off at Guantanamo, Newport, Bar Harbor and Boston, when the fleet is together. At such times interest ashore is quite as great as aboard ship.

If rosters for college games think themselves the acme of infectious enthusiasm it is because they haven't seen a navy contest. It takes a bunch of jacks, effervescing with the excitement of an intership contest, to give the former cards and spades in emotional pyrotechnics, for the games are always vigorously contested, the various ship's crews being represented on the side lines, howling encouragement in their own peculiar fashion.

As a rule competition in the events is eliminative, the ships first contesting by divisions and the winners of the divisions in championships playing each other for fleet championship.

One of the things that will make the visit of the fleet to New York a memorable one for the jacks is the football and basketball championships for 1912 to be played here, for which Park Commissioner Seever has loaned certain local fields. So New York folk who have never been treated to the spectacle of Uncle Sam's sailors competing for supremacy in athletics will now be able to do so. It will be a unique series of events and well worth seeing. For the past two years the Connecticut team has won the football trophy—a wooden football, gilded, by this year several other ships are trying hard to wrest it from them.

It is when the fleet is in Southern waters for aerial target practice that baseball is particularly enjoyed.

"Then," says Lieut. Hooper, "baseball parties are landed each day and the games are as hotly contested as those of the major leagues. The men are as rabid fans as those ashore and keep as sharp tabs on the official scores as any landsman. Each evening about 8 o'clock the scores of the various games in the National and American leagues are sent from the flagship by 'radio' and I



Football Game at Brooklyn Navy Yard



"Jim" Lowman
HEAVYWEIGHT
CHAMPION
OF THE
ATLANTIC
FLEET
1912



"Sam" Robideau
LIGHTWEIGHT
CHAMPION
OF THE
NAVY



Dancing is One of Jack's Joys



The Connecticut Baseball Team

pulled off. "And here," says the chief athletic officer, "the sailor is naturally in his element and the races are highly spectacular. The course is usually between the line of ships and as the boats skim over the waters all the men 'man the rails' and cheer their favorite team to the echo."

For this competition the regular twelve oared service cutter of the navy is used, that is, unless as sometimes happens, the men of a special ship get together and buy one of their own. Such a craft is generally termed a "tailor made" boat because of its superior style and finish. The Battenberg cup, presented by Prince Louis for the crew races, is most desired and all efforts are bent at winning it. A large number of other cups have at various times been put up for competition, among them one by August Belmont. Other trophies are the Pensacola, Duncan, Coffin, Narragansett Bay, Havana and Pedro cups.

Money prizes are sometimes offered too, and a ship will sometimes win as much as \$5,000 in purses. One year the Indiana won that sum, and the Maine \$2,800 in a special event, a three mile race, which was pulled off in 26 minutes. On the same occasion the marines on the Indiana won a purse of \$3,000 besides the Dutch Challenge cup.

In Guantanamo also occurs the final bouts to determine the fleet championships in boxing. For this the men train as industriously as though they were really the "white hopes" of the professional class, and in spite of the fact that their training facilities are limited the navy has turned out some of the best men in the boxing world to-day.

For example, there are Sailor Burke and Tom Sharkey, both graduates of the navy prize fighters, and Sammy Robideau, lightweight champion of the navy, who is considered one of the best lightweights in the country either in or out of the navy. Aside from those mentioned there are Kucera, the feather-

sailor contingency are a constantly shifting population, he explains, the same as in any big educational institution. The men remain for anywhere from three to eight years, some few for life.

"This constant change in the personnel of the men," says Paymaster Bowne, "not only means constant work on the part of the officers to mould them into shape but it also means that Uncle Sam is just so much richer by every man who leaves the navy after serving his apprenticeship. He has just so many more

to call on in case of necessity, for a man never forgets the A B C of the war game once he learns it. So for this reason, as well as because it contributes to the health and pleasure of the men, nothing they can get in the way of training is thrown away on them.

"And too, the sailor's life is a pleasant one. There is lots of hard work to be sure, but there is plenty to eat, a clean place to sleep and a good share of recreation. In the matter of athletics, as well as in other ways, the Government does more

for its sailors than any other country. Where will you find it a matter for active education and concern it is with us? Certainly not in the British navy."

"The superiority of the American sailors in athletics has been demonstrated often. Our men are satisfied with nothing but the best. They want to be experts in whatever they undertake; therefore they train systematically and are furnished with every facility in the way of equipment they need. This is provided for from the canteen profits. It is ar-

Championship Contests Are Now Conducted in All Parts of the World

a plan to introduce the Kinemacolor pictures soon.

Another innovation which Capt. Wilson is also responsible for, according to Paymaster Bowne, is the setting aside of one of the gun compartments on the ship as a reading and writing room for the sailors. Though small, it is a great boon to them, for now they can write comfortably at a desk instead of on their duty boxes. Moreover there are provided between thirty and forty magazines with two or three copies each of the daily papers, so the sailors, when at leisure, can pass the time reading if they so elect.

"The sailors like dancing," adds Paymaster Bowne, "and though they may not always take advantage of the band concerts given every noon and night, if a popular air like 'Great Big Beautiful Doll' or something that especially appeals strikes up, the impulse will move them to take a turn around the deck."

"Every now and then smokers followed by a spread are enjoyed, and taken altogether the sailor's life isn't so bad after all. Of course they don't have all the advantages of men ashore, but there certainly are compensations; and taken as a whole the men are as happy as the same number of college fellows on the campus of a big university. In fact, I always think of the navy as a big ocean university, where the men are trained in the war game as in a thousand other ways that develops them physically, mentally and morally. The men lead clean, wholesome lives, and altogether you won't find a finer lot of fellows anywhere than those in the United States Navy."

Personally Jack has a love of betting. Gambling amounts to a passion with him, and at the big athletic events a considerable sum of money is apt to change hands. But Jack doesn't confine himself to big events, for as one sailor says he bets at the drop of a hat.

He carries his propensity for wagering to the possible destination of the ship, whether he will have salt or fresh water in which to wash his hammock and a thousand and one things beside. You see one of Jack's duties is to give his hammock a thorough scrubbing once a fortnight, and sometimes when the vaporizers that turn salt water into fresh fail to work he has to use salt water for the purpose. Obviously this process isn't altogether one conducive to sweet temper, and this is considered one of Jack's great trials.

Every minute of Jack's day has a corresponding occupation for him, and from reveille, when the bugle's "I can't get 'em up" penetrates to every part of the battleship, until taps is sounded the sailor's life is a busy one. First of all Jack arises at 5:30. His first duty is to turn to and wash down decks and aloft up things generally. Mess gear comes at 7:15, which into the mess means getting down the tables for breakfast. Then comes "pipe down" for mess. This is a long drawn note on the boat's whistle.

Mess lasts half an hour usually and then follows the call for colors, quarters prayer and drill, and before he knows it Jack's morning is gone and it is a quarter to twelve, when dinner time has arrived.

"Stand by, scrub and wash clothes" is the next order from the boat's, and this comes at ten minutes past one. This arduous duty over there is drill until 4:30, when the boat's calls "Pipe down clothes if dry," for meanwhile Jack's clothes are swinging on the line. Now the "smoking lamp" is lit and for a while Jack is lost in contemplation of the delicious wafting of the picturesque customs that have come down from the old navy and at this time the life is a privileged to enjoy their pipes and cigars. In earlier years the smoking lamp, an ordinary copper affair, was brought up from below decks at stated intervals during the day, and it was the signal to "smoke up," but while in more recent years the actual operation has been abandoned the term remains.

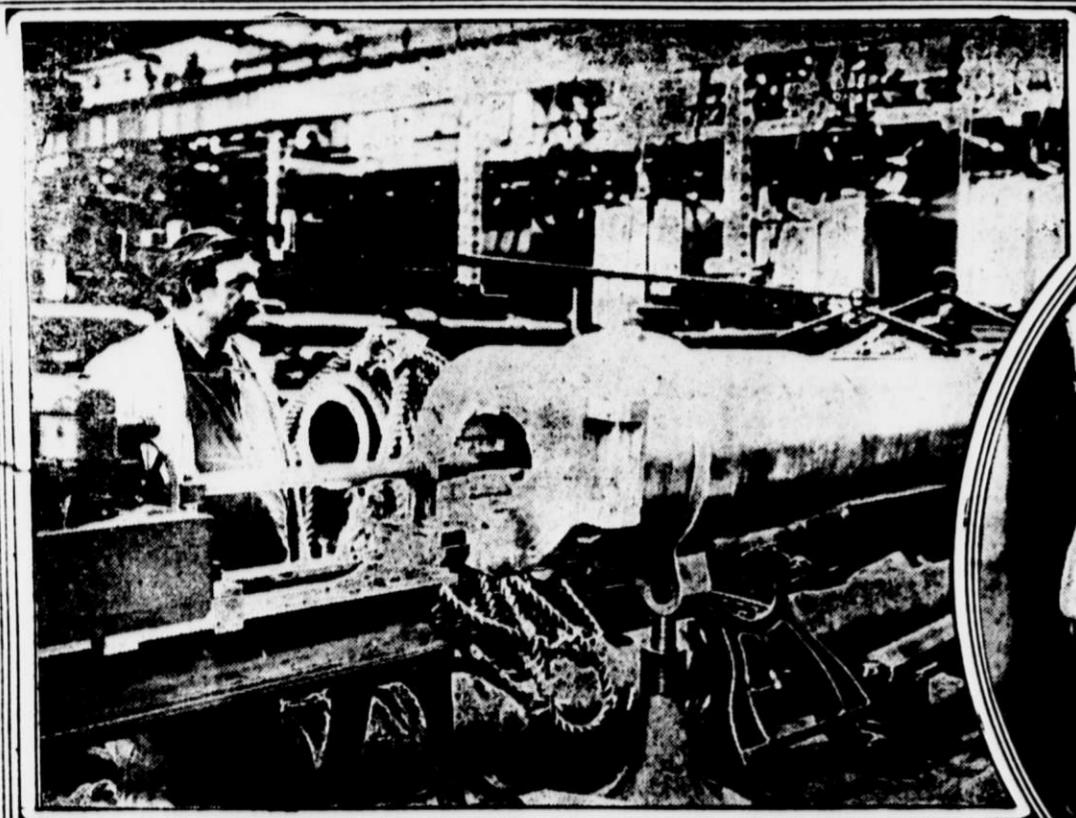
On Sunday there is the call after morning drill to "rig church," that is prepare the deck for service. At the same time the church pennant, a blue cross on a white triangle, is hoisted above the national colors.

Appropos of this feature Capt. H. B. Wilson of the North Dakota is considering

Making Rifles for the Dreadnoughts Gun Factory at Washington Turns Out Weapons Which Are Marvels of Power and Accuracy

UNDER the roof of the main gun shop at the navy yard in Washington is assembled what is probably the most splendid assortment of machine tools in the United States, if not in the world, and it is there that the bulk of the navy's ordnance is

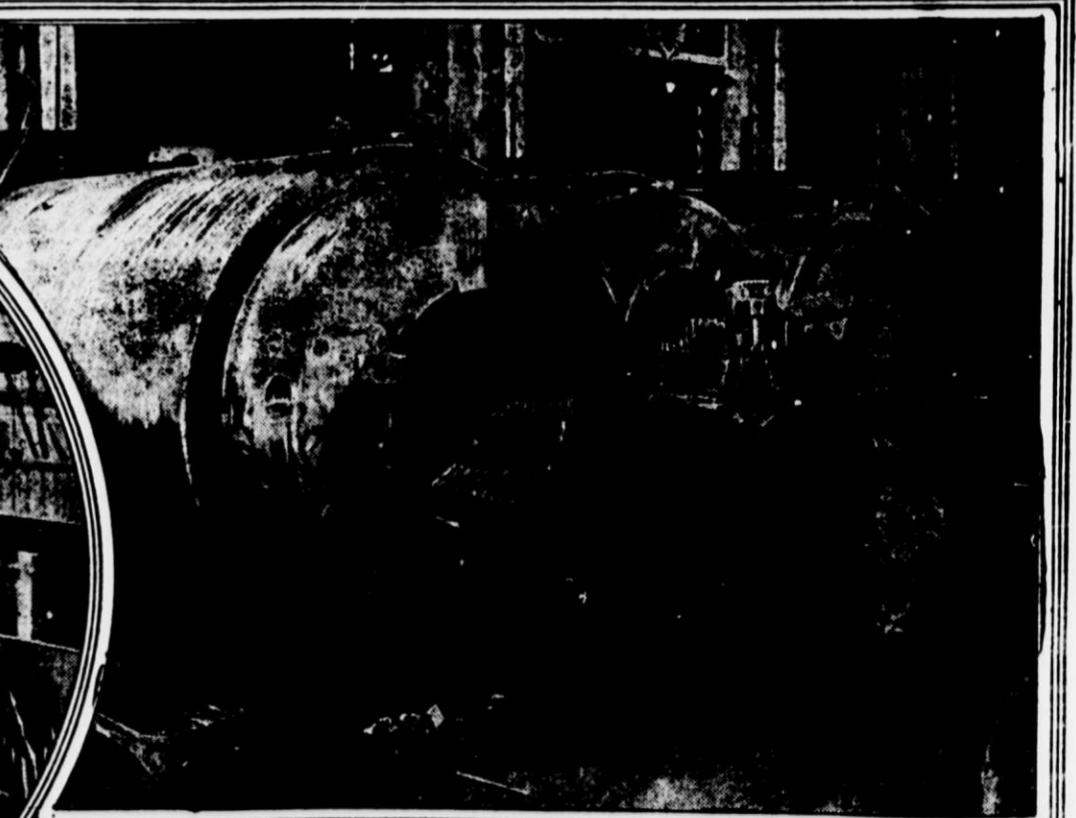
our 14 inch rifles—the latest and most formidable type of naval guns. Even though the weight of this weapon is but 1-622 part of that of either the loaded Wyoming or the Arkansas, still the rifle is capable of developing within its walls a measure of propulsive energy equivalent to the force



Boring the Powder Chamber



Making the Eye of the Gun



The Bore of One of Our 12 inch Rifles

can assure you they are eagerly awaited both by officers and men alike."

The Minnesota team holds the baseball pennant at present, but Lieut. Hooper insists they will have to put up a fight to hold it as all the ball players have registered a solemn vow to "put up the best games of their lives" to get it away.

At Guantanamo the cutter races are

weight champion aboard the North Dakota, who is said to be every whit as good as Sharkey; Robert Dor, lightweight champion of the Connecticut, and O'Donnell, bantamweight.

"A big national university" is the way Paymaster Bowne, athletic officer of the North Dakota, describes Uncle Sam's navy. The 50,000 men comprising the

built. As a rule the layman fails to appreciate the wonders of the weapons constructed there.

Take either the Arkansas or the Wyoming, the latest and biggest of our commissioned dreadnoughts. They represent a dead weight or total displacement when deep laden of 27,243 tons. On the other hand, picture a mass of sixty-three tons of steel, for such is the weight of one of

required to lift bodily one of these ships to a height of 145 feet in a minute's time.

To do this the gun must be strong enough to withstand the rending stresses of a powder charge of 875 pounds; and it must also be equal to an endurance of more than a hundred of these explosive tests before showing sufficient wear

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